

# Executive Memorandum

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## Building a Global Training Base: Military Transformation's Missing Priority

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Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is directing the preparation of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a mandatory report to Congress that assesses the military's strategy, force structure, missions, and resources. It is expected that one of this QDR's primary purposes will be to help refine the Pentagon's transformation efforts, the process of shifting the armed forces from an instrument optimized to fight the Cold War to one capable of mastering future ways of conflict. One priority for the QDR should be to establish the requirement for a global training base to match the global missions that the military anticipates needing to undertake in the decades ahead.

**Requirement for a Global Training Base.** In the 1980s, as part of rebuilding the armed forces following a decade of neglect after the Vietnam War, the services began a training revolution based on establishing combat training centers that would replicate as closely as possible the conditions of battle without real casualties. The Army established three combat centers: the National Training Center in California, the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana, and the Combat Maneuver Training Center in Germany.

In 1997, an independent National Defense Panel, chartered by Congress to review the work of the first QDR, suggested establishing a Joint

National Training Center to extend the military's "train as you fight" philosophy to joint training operations involving forces from more than one service, such as Army ground troops fighting with support from Air Force bombers.

In the 2001 QDR, Secretary Rumsfeld announced that the military planned to establish a

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- The Pentagon should establish a global training base to match the global missions that the military anticipates needing to undertake in the decades ahead.
  - A model for the global training base capability already exists in the U.S. European Command.
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Joint National Training Center. Initial thinking focused on building a physical center with live-fire ranges but then shifted to constructing a training network that linked together existing service capabilities, primarily for computer simulations supporting joint exercises. Rumsfeld assigned

the mission for establishing and administering the renamed Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) to Joint Forces Command, headquartered in Virginia. The command has focused largely on training high-level staffs and forces deploying from the United States.

In 2003, Secretary Rumsfeld began a global repositioning initiative, moving forces from their

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Cold War bases to places where they would be better suited to conduct likely missions in the 21st century. Part of the repositioning will significantly reduce the ground forces permanently stationed in Europe and Asia and increase the number of austere and temporary training and operating bases that might be used in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Africa. In addition, forces positioned anywhere in the world will be expected to deploy anywhere in the world to conduct different kinds of missions with different allies—old and new—as well as with other representatives of the federal government, such as the State Department, as part of “inter-agency” teams.

Guidance issued for the impending QDR exacerbates the training challenge. The guidance includes a “threat” matrix defining four broad areas of needed capabilities to address: conventional military threats, “irregular” challenges such as terrorism, catastrophic dangers like weapons of mass destruction, and “disruptive” threats from new or unexpected capabilities, such as computer attacks.

It is not clear that the JNTC adequately reflects the needs of this future force. The JNTC does not address how it will meet the training requirements of a globally based joint military. While it has worked on readying higher headquarters for deploying overseas, it has done little to prepare troops on the ground for combat, counterinsurgency, tracking down “loose nukes,” and other challenging tasks in diverse operational environments—missions for which the services cannot adequately train by themselves.

**Building a Global Training Base.** In order to provide worldwide support for global forces, the global training base must:

- Be capable of supporting all the threat matrix missions, anywhere in the world, from small groups of soldiers “in the dirt” to a general’s or admiral’s command post with computer simulation;
- Support training with allied forces;
- Be deployable into austere training locations;

- Provide means for troops to experience diverse cultures, geography, and environments; and
- Be able to support interagency training.

A model for this kind of global training base capability already exists. The U.S. European Command (EUCOM) has converted its Cold War training facilities in southern Germany (including the Combat Maneuver Training Center) into a network of assets and training ranges capable of mimicking not only traditional missions such as “force on force” combat, but also operations in Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. They have trained American and allied forces from Europe before they deployed in harm’s way. This capability is also deployable and has been used to train with new NATO allies in Eastern Europe.

Similar-type capabilities could be organized to provide global coverage. The Joint Readiness Training Center and other joint facilities in Louisiana could provide this support to South America and Africa. Army, Air Force, Marine, and Navy training facilities in California, including the National Training Center, could support the U.S. and Canada (including homeland defense missions), while a capability similar to the EUCOM structure could be established in Australia for operations in Asia.

**Setting the Course.** Part of the results of the QDR should be a rethinking and restructuring of the Joint National Training Capability. What is needed is not a “national” capability, but a global training base capable of training missions across the threat matrix anywhere in the world. A global training base could be built by leveraging existing resources and proven means, providing a cost-effective way to provide unprecedented transformational capabilities.

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